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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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SOURCE Newspapers as indicated.

FAMINE SPREADS TO CENTRAL AND SOUTH CHINA; ANIMAL EPIDEMIC STRIKES CENTRAL CHINA

HALF OF CHINA SUFFERS FAMINE -- Hong Kong Hu-sheng Pao, 25 Mar 50

Peiping -- According to a Chinese Communist radio broadcast of 24 March 1950, the famine situation is becoming serious and has spread from North and East China into Central and South China. The same broadcast stated that several million people living south of the Yangtze River, including those in Hunan, Kiangsi, and Kwangtung, are on the verge of starvation.

MANY STARVING IN KWANGTUNG -- Hong Kong Hu-sheng Pao, 25 Mar 50

Canton -- Famine conditions in Kwangtung are becoming more serious daily. At the present rate, approximately one third of the people in the province face starvation in the near future.

Most seriously hit are the hsiens located around Canton. The continuous requisitioning of grain by the Communists has emptied their granaries. There is no hope for spring sowing because they are unable to get seeds. Many farmers have already escaped elsewhere. Others have joined guerrilla units to oppose CCP troops.

STARTS PRODUCTION-FOR-RELIEF WORK -- Hong Kong Wen-hui Pao, 22 Mar 50

Hankow, 20 March (Hsin-hua) -- On 18 March, the fourth administration conference of the Central and South China Military and Political Council was held in Hankow. The conference discussed means of coping with the spring and summer famine anticipated in some 171 hsiens of the Central and South China Area. Some 10 million people in the affected areas must step up their production-for-relief campaign to prevent future catastrophe.

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Teng Tzu-k'uei (Ueda: 1223, 2262, 3284), deputy chairman of the council and the presiding official of the conference, emphasized that the immediate needs in the calamity areas are to mobilize everyone to participate in the production-for-relief program, to carry out rent reduction, to make proper and honest disposal of grain, to encourage peasants to pursue such side occupations as repair of dikes and transport of grain, and to start mutual help and austerity-relief movements.

HUPEH PEASANTS HOLD CONFERENCE -- Hong Kong Wen-hui Pao, 22 Mar 50

Hankow, 21 March (Hsin-hua) -- The first Hupeh Province Peasants Delegates' Conference was held in Wu-ch'ang 5 - 15 March 1950. The conference formally established the Hupeh Province Peasants' Association with Liu Chien-hsun (Ueda: 849, 3006, 891), deputy secretary of the Hupeh Province Committee, CCP Central Committee, as its chairman. The draft constitution was adopted and 77 members of the executive committee of the association were appointed.

The conference also decided that the immediate task confronting the peasants is to increase agricultural output by mass participation in spring cultivation and to reduce rent to tide the farmers over the spring famine period.

The conference also decided to recruit 6 million members into the peasants' association, institute political reform in rural areas, organize armed militia to establish a people's democratic dictatorship, suppress counterrevolutionists, protect benefits already gained by the peasants, appeal to all peasants within the province to improve their understanding of the political situation, and prepare to carry out land reform after the autumn harvest.

STARVATION AND DISEASES KILL ANIMALS -- Hong Kong Hsin-tao Jih-pao, 25 Mar 50

Sung-chiang and Ch'u Hsien -- Many work animals are dying from starvation and diseases in Kiangsu, Anhwei, and Chekiang provinces.

Kiangsu Province -- A serious rinderpest epidemic exists in Chin-shan Hsien. According to incomplete data, some 1,000 head of work cattle have died from the disease since the autumn harvests last year. In Chin-shan-wei and Chang-yen areas alone some 500 head have died thus far. To combat the epidemics, the Chin-shan authorities summoned 15 veterinarians to the affected areas on 2 March 1950. The special commissioner's office also dispatched veterinarians to combat the new outbreak of rinderpest in Tang-shan.

Anhwei Province -- Many deaths of cattle and donkeys from starvation and illness have occurred in Ch'u Hsien, Su Hsien, and An-ch'ing (Huai-ning) special districts. The authorities in the An-ch'ing Special Commissioner's Office have extended a loan of 550,000 catties of fodder to farmers in the district to prevent starvation of work animals. The continuous snowstorms in Su Hsien Special District, Ssu Hsien, and Tun-chi area have killed about 600 donkeys. In Ting-yuan, Lai-an, Hsu-i, and Ch'u hsiens of the Ch'u Hsien Special District, some 331 head of cattle and donkeys have died suddenly.

The symptoms of the above disease are loss of appetite, violent shaking and trembling, followed by sudden death. Examination of a dead animal's stomach has revealed that death was caused by live red worms which had eaten away the animals stomach linings.

Chekiang Province -- Of a total of 10,051 head of cattle in T'ung-lu Hsien, the number lost from starvation and sickness has already reached 2,225 head.

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